EysmlA NyD LDb Nml EyeulA BAWjlA

THE CORRECT REPLY TO THE ONE WHO CHANGED THE RELIGION OF THE MESSIAH

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PART 1. THE UNIVERSAL NATURE OF MUHAMMAD’S PROPHETHOOD

B. THE NATURE OF PROPHETHOOD

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SYNOPSIS

The Missionary's argument is ambiguous by nature and requires carefully selected diplomatic modes of reasoning. By attempting to use as evidence texts from the Qur'an in order to legitimise his own innovated religion, he falls into a great dilemma. Is he affirming the truthfulness of Muhammad and that of the Qur'an by his use of the texts of the Qur'an to legitimise his own religion? And does he consider that the Qur'anic texts are sufficient in and of themselves for establishing truth? For if this is the case, then this demonstrates that his own religion is false by necessity. Or is he covering up a devised and orchestrated play of deceit by preying upon the ignorance of the average Muslim and trying to hoodwink him into believing that the Qur'an affirms and legalises the innovated Christian religion?

The Missionary is ignorant of the true nature of prophethood, and hence maintains his silence, neither affirming Muhammad and nor rejecting him as a Messenger and Prophet of Allaah. Either he will affirm that he was a truthful and righteous man, or a great statesman, or a true leader, or one who excelled in morals. But on the issue of Muhammad's prophethood he maintains diplomatic silence. If he were to make his position clear on this issue, he would not be able to approach any Muslim with any sound argument. Either he affirms Muhammad, who is known to have made the claim to prophethood, in which case his own religion is falsified. Or he rejects Muhammad, in which case he has even more reason to reject his own religion and reject Christ, since the prophethood of Muhammad, his integrity and truthfulness, and miraculous works (through the power of Allaah) has come to us through successive transmissions in every generation and has been documented to a greater extent and degree than that of Christ.

Therefore, the Christian Missionary is bankrupt by nature, neither possessing sound argument and nor, in the majority of cases, possessing sincerity of purpose.

The Christian Missionary also does not understand the true nature of the call of Christ and the predominance of pagan worship amongst the Greeks and Romans, whom Christ summoned to the worship of Allaah, Monotheism. This is because his religion is an innovated religion, the tenets, rituals and symbols of which were decided by men - a few hundred years after the departure of Christ. Neither does there exist a consensus for these innovated tenets or rituals and nor any successive transmission. Rather, his religion is but fashioned from the pagan concepts of the Romans and Greeks, who accepted Christ as their Lord, but within the contexts and confines of their pre-existent pagan beliefs and idealisms.

The sending of Muhammad marked the call to the worship of Allaah, Monotheism, as did the sending of Christ and his call to the Roman, Greek pagans.

B. THE NATURE OF PROPHETHOOD

Said the scribe in the bishop's words:

The claim of Muhammad being sent only to the Arabs of Jahiliyya

They said, "We heard that a man appeared from amongst the Arabs named Muhammad who said that he was a Messenger of Allaah and that he was bringing a Book which he said was handed down from Allaah." I said to them, "If you have heard of this Book and this person, and have gone to the trouble of obtaining among yourselves this Book which he brought, then why do you not follow him, especially as it says in this Book 'If anyone seeks something other than Islam as a religion, it will not be accepted from him, and he will be a loser in the Hereafter?'" (3:85). They answered, "For various reasons, among which is that the Book is in Arabic, which is not our language. But it says in the Book, "We have sent down an Arabic Qur'an perhaps you may understand" (12:2; 26:195; 2:151; 3:164; 28:48: 36:6). When we saw these verses we knew that he was not sent to us but to the Arabs of the Jahiliyya of whom they say "There was not sent any messenger or warner before him." He did not obligate us to follow him, because there were sent messengers to us before him who preached to us and warned us in our own languages through our religion to which we hold fast until today. They handed on to us the Torah and the Gospel in our language, as this Book that the Messenger brought bears witness (14:4; 16:36; 30:47). This Book also makes it clear that he was only sent to the Arabs of the Jahiliyya (3:85)."

Diplomatic Reasoning

This passage is taken verbatim from the first chapter. This chapter does not oppose him [Muhammad], neither confirming him nor rejecting him. Rather, they claim that in this Book [the Qur'an] itself did not say that he was sent to them, but rather to the Arabs of the Jahiliyya and they hold that reason also prevents his having been sent to them.

Beginning the reply: Arguing with ambiguities

In answer, we will begin by pointing out that Allaah disclosed that he was sent to them and to all mankind and jinn. We will show that he never said that he was not sent to them and that there is nothing in this Book to indicate that. We will show that they have argued from verses whose meaning they have misunderstood. They have omitted many unambiguous texts in his Book which show clearly that he was sent to them. This is similar to what they have done to the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms and the teachings of the prophets - they have omitted many clear texts and have clung to a few obscure ones whose meaning they do not know.

Discussion of the veracity of a claimant to prophethood takes precedence

It is obvious that the discussion of the veracity or falsity of a claimant to prophethood must be precede the discussion of the general and specific elements of his prophethood, even though it may occur that one of the two be known before the other. But these people claim [to know] specific characteristics of his prophethood and state that the Qur'an indicates such things. We will answer their claims in order, chapter by chapter.

Verifying two essential principles of prophethood

The discussion concerning anyone who taught mankind that he was a messenger of Allaah to them - as did Muhammad and others who said they were messengers of Allaah like Abraham, Moses, and prophets like

them and as did the lying, would be prophets like Musaylima al-Kadhdhab and Al-Aswad al-Ansi ought to be based on two principles:

1) That what he said in his message and his command is known, and that what he disclosed and what he commanded be known. That is, did he say he was the messenger of Allaah to all people or that he was only sent to a specific group, and not to all others?

2) That we know whether he is truthful or lying.

Faith is achieved by these two principles

On these two principles a detailed faith is achieved i.e. knowledge of the truthfulness of the prophet and knowledge of what he brought. A summary faith is achieved by the first of these principles - that is, a prophet's trustworthiness in what he brought - like our faith in previous messengers. The truthfulness or falsity of a prophet may be known before one knows what a prophet said. Conversely, what he uttered may be known before it is learned whether he was trustworthy or false.

Revisiting Christian apologetic logic

In this book of theirs these people have built their arguments on what the Messenger stated; they claim it is a proof that they have no obligation to follow him, and that it commands the religion which they follow at present, even after its abrogation and corruption. After that they mention independent arguments for the correctness of their religion, and then they state what they reject as objectionable about him [Muhammad] and his religion. Thus we begin by presenting an answer to what they have argued from the Qur'an, just as they have presented it in their treatise.

Only two possiblities

These people have claimed that Muhammad was not sent to them but to the Arabs of the Jahiliyya. This claim has two alternatives: either they hold that he himself did not claim that he was sent to them and that only his community has made that claim, or they hold that he claimed that he was sent to them, and that he was lying in his claim. Their claim in the beginning of this book demands the first alternative.

Silent consent or silent disapproval

About other works it may be said that they have suggested the other alternatives [that he was lying]. Here they do not really deny his messengership to the Arabs, but only reject his having been sent to them. As for his mission to the Arabs, they make no firm statement about confirming or rejecting it, although it is evident that their formulation demands a confirmation of his messengership to the Arabs. Actually they confirm what agrees with their view while rejecting that which opposes it.

Addressing two issues

We will show that their argumentation is not correct in anything of that which the Prophet brought. Subsequently we will address two questions. We will show that in the Qur'an there is no proof for them, nor does it contradict itself or any of the previous books of the

prophets. That from which they argue is an argument against them, and even if Muhammad had not been sent, it would not have been in any respect an argument for them. How could it have been an argument for them when the Book that Muhammad brought is in agreement with the rest of the teaching of the prophets, as well as with sound reason, in showing the falsity of their religion - their view of the trinity, divine union, and other things.

Consistency in Muslim argument against Jews and Christians

This is in contrast to Muslims, for their argumentation against the People of the Book - the Jews and Christians - is consistent with what was brought by the prophets before Muhammad. But the argumentation of the People of the Book is not acceptable if they argue from what Muhammad brought. The reason is because Muslims admit the prophethood of Moses, Jesus, David, Solomon, and the other prophets, and according to them they must put faith in every book which Allaah revealed and in every prophet whom Allaah sent. This is the basis of the religion of the Muslims. Whoever disbelieves in one prophet or in one book is, according to them, a disbeliever. Among them whoever even insults any of the prophets is a disbeliever worthy of death (2:136-3: 2:177; 2:285).

The meaning of "the Book" (al-kitab)

"The Book" is a generic term for every book revealed by Allaah, and includes the Torah and the Gospel, just as it includes the Qur'an (2:285; 21:5; 42:15). In these passages Allaah has stated that this Book which He has revealed is a guidance for the Allaah fearing who believe in the unseen, who undertake the prayer (*al-salah*), who pay the poor tax, who believe in what Allaah has revealed to him [Muhammad] and in what He has revealed to those before him, and who are certain of the afterlife. He has encompassed these people with prosperity, and no one will be among the prosperous unless he be from those whom Allaah called "those who believe in what was revealed to you [Muhammad] and what was revealed to those before it" (2:4).

Belief in the Prophets. Three pre-requisites

It is not permitted for any Muslim to reject a single thing of what was handed down to those who preceded Muhammad, but any argumentation from that demands that three prerequisites [be fulfilled].

1) Its being established as [having come] from the prophets.

2) The correctness of its translation into Arabic or into the language in which it appears - e.g., Greek or Syriac. The language of Moses, David, Jesus etc., of the Israelite prophets was Hebrew and whoever says the language of Jesus was Syriac or Greek is in error.

3) Exegesis of the passage and knowledge of its meaning.

The nature of Muslim objections

Muslims have not rejected a single one of their arguments by denying what any one of the prophets said. They may, however, reject the

transmitter [of the prophetic statement] or they may misinterpret what has been handed down from the prophets by some other meaning that they desire. Even though Muslims may err in rejecting some transmitted information or in their interpretation of something handed down from the prophets, it is like someone among them or among the people of the other religions who errs in respect to something of what was handed down from him whose prophecy he accepts or in interpreting that which was handed down from him.

Difference between Muslim objections and blatant disbelief of the People of the Book

This is different from rejecting the prophet himself; blatant (*sarih*) disbelief is not the same as that of the People of the Book. Their intention is only achieved by rejecting some of what Allaah has revealed. When someone rejects one word of what a person who declares himself to be a messenger of Allaah has disclosed, that person's argumentation from the rest of his teaching is invalid, and their argument for what they are trying to prove is untenable. The reason is that someone who says he is the messenger of Allaah either is truthful in his calling himself messenger of Allaah and in everything else that he discloses from Allaah, or he is false if he lied in even one word from Allaah.

The true nature of prophethood

If he is truthful in that manner [in his claiming to be the messenger of Allaah], he is prevented from lying concerning Allaah in a single thing that reached him from Allaah. Whoever lies about Allaah, even in one word, is someone perpetrating falsehood against Allaah and is no messenger of Allaah. It is clear that whoever perpetrates a lie against Allaah is a lying pseudo-prophet, and it is not permissible to make an argument from the information he has disclosed from Allaah. It can be known that Allaah did not send that person. If he said that something was merely a statement [of his own] and it was correct, it could be accepted, not because he received it from Allaah or because he was a messenger from Allaah, but rather just as something true is acceptable from idolaters and other unbelievers. If idol worshipers speak what is true concerning Allaah, like the affirmation of the idolatrous Arabs that Allaah created the heavens and the earth, we do not accuse them of lying on such a matter, even though they are unbelievers. Thus if an unbeliever holds that Allaah is Living, Omnipotent, a Creator, we do not reject him for [holding] this opinion.

However, anyone who has lied about Allaah in even one word and said that Allaah revealed it to him - when Allaah did not reveal it to him - that person is one of the liars nothing of whose statements which they claim to have received from Allaah may be used as argumentation. They are like other people in whatever they say other than that, and even like other liars similar to them. If the truth of their statement is known from a source other than them, this is acceptable for establishing an indication of its correctness, rather than for their having said it. But if its correctness is not known from a source other than them, there is

no proof for it in their saying it after it is established that they have lied about Allaah.

Therefore, if these people affirm the messengership of Muhammad and hold he was trustworthy in the Book and the Wisdom which he received from Allaah, they must place faith in everything in the Book and the Wisdom which is proven to be from him, just as faith must be placed in everything which the [other] messengers brought.

Christian's destroy their own argument

If they reject him in even one word or if they doubt his truthfulness in it, they are prevented by that from affirming that he is a messenger of Allaah. If they do not affirm that he is a messenger of Allaah, then their argumentation from what he said is like their arguing from statements of the rest of those who are not prophets or even of those who are liars or whose truthfulness is doubtful.

Obviously a person who is known to have spoken lies about Allaah in what he claims to have received from Him or whose veracity is doubtful is not known to be the Messenger of Allaah or that he is truthful in all of what he says and [claims] to have received from Allaah. If that is not known about him, it is not known that Allaah revealed a thing to him. On the other hand, if his falsity is known, it is known that Allaah did not reveal a thing to him, nor did He send him. In this way the falsity of Musaylima al-Kadhdhab, Al-Aswad al-Ansi and Tulayha al-Asadi is known, just as is known the falsity of Mani and similar lying false prophets.

False prophets

If his truthfulness is doubted in even one word - if it is possible that a single word be incorrect either intentionally or inadvertently - then it is not possible at the same time to confirm him in the rest of what reached him from Allaah. Conformation in what someone discloses from Allaah is only [possible] if he is a faithful messenger who lies neither intentionally nor inadvertently. Everyone whom Allaah sent must be truthful in every thing which he receives from Allaah and lie neither intentionally nor accidentally.

More criteria of prophethood

This is a matter on which all people - Muslims, Jews, Christians and others - agree. They agree that the messenger must be truthful and that he lie neither intentionally nor accidentally. Without that [infallibility] the goal of prophethood is not attained (7:104-5; 10:15; 16:101-102: 69:44-47). This is elaborated elsewhere.

Agreement on this issue

The point here is that their arguing from even one word of what Muhammad brought is inadmissible in any respect. If he was a truthful messenger in everything which he disclosed from Allaah (and everyone knows that what he brought is opposed to the religion of the Christians), it is necessary that the religion of the Christians be false. If they hold that one word of what he brought is false, it is necessary that

End of argument?!

he [cannot be] for them a truthful prophet receiving information from Allaah.

Looking beneath the covers

Whether they say that he is a just ruler, a scholar, an upright man, or whether they make him a great saint among the very greatest saints, however much they extol him or praise him when they see his dazzling virtues, his obvious favours and his spotless Law, when they reject or doubt him in one word which he brought, they have rejected his claiming to be a messenger of Allaah and [his claim] to have received this Qur'an from Allaah. Someone who was false in his claiming to be the messenger of Allaah is not one of the prophets or messengers. The statement of anyone who is not one of them is no proof at all, but his situation is the same as other people like himself.

The harsh reality

If the truth of what he says is known by detailed argument, his statement is accepted because his truthfulness is known from a source other than himself, not because he said it. If the truth of the statement is not known [from external reasons], it is not acceptable. Thus it is clear that someone who does not profess about a person who has stated that he is the messenger of Allaah and infallibility preserved from establishing intentional or inadvertent error cannot properly use any statement of that individual as argument.

Disproof of the erudite amongst the People of the Book

This principle disproves the view of the insightful among the People of the Book, and against the ignorant among them it is even more confounding. Many or most intelligent People of the Book extol Muhammad for his calling the people to [affirm] the Oneness of Allaah, for his prohibition against the worship of idols, for his confirming the Torah, the Gospel, and those sent as messenger before him, for his manifesting the wonder of the Qur'an which he brought, for the good qualities of the Law which he brought, for the superior characteristics of the community which believed in him, for the signs, proofs, miracles, and favours which were manifested at his and their hands.

Exploring the argument further

Nevertheless, in spite of this they hold that "he was sent to others than us," or else that he was [merely] a just ruler with a just government, and that he attained kinds of knowledge like those of the People of the Book and others, and that through his knowledge and his rituals he laid down and systemised for them a Law just as their own leaders had imposed on them the canons and laws which they possessed. Whenever they say this, they do not thereby become believers in him, and simply from their saying that it is not permissible for them to use a thing of what he said as an argument.

Overwhelming successive transmission of the claim of

It is known by overwhelming transmission that which all groups of people from all religious traditions admit as true, that is, that he said that he was a messenger of Allaah to all people, and that Allaah sent down upon him the Qur'an. If he was truthful in that, anyone who

rejects him in a single word has rejected the messenger of Allaah, and whoever rejects the messenger of Allaah is an unbeliever. But if he was not truthful in that, then he was not Allaah's messenger, but rather a liar. It is not possible to use as an argument anything in the statement of someone who lies concerning Allaah by saying "Allaah sent me with this [message]" when Allaah did not send him.

Messengership

If they say that their intent is to point out that his teaching is internally contradictory, some of it contradicting the rest, they should be told that this would require that he not be a true prophet, and thus it would be improper for them to use any statement of his as an argument to the extent they do.

The claim of internally contradictory teaching

If we show that the elements of his teachings are mutually confirmatory and similarly that his teaching confirms that of the prophets before him and that the teaching of all the prophets agrees with sound reason, then [it should be granted that] nothing of known truth is contradictory to revealed religion or to reason. If this is accepted, we then say to someone who holds that he was a messenger sent to the Jahiliyya Arabs but not to the People of the Book that it is necessarily obvious to everyone who is acquainted with his affairs - which are known by a successive transmission which is more strongly consecutive than what is transmitted from Moses, Jesus, and others, through the Qur'an which he transmitted from him and his sunna which has been successively handed down from him, and the sunna of the rightly guided khalifas. That he stated that he was sent to the People of the Book, Jews and Christians, just as he said that he was sent as a messenger to those without a Book. He stated even that he was sent to all the children of Adam, to Arabs and to Byzantine, Persian, Turkish, Indian, Berber, Ethiopian non-Arabs, and to all other nations. He even stated that he was sent to both the two races - the human race and that of the jinn.

Demonstrating the compelling logic of argument

All these are clear issues successively handed down from him, upon whose transmission from him his Companions are agreed. This is despite their great number and their dispersal into various regions and situations - those who accompanied him were in the tens of thousands. Their actual number cannot be counted and is known only to Allaah alone.

Successive transmission revisited

The followers (*al-tabi'un*), whose number was many times that of the Companions, handed that down from them. After that it was transmitted century after century until our time with its great number of Muslims and their dispersal into the eastern and western regions of the earth. This occurred as he had foretold beforehand in a sound hadith: "I knit my brows towards earth and I saw its eastern and western regions; the possession of my community will include that which I see when I squint."

The open call of Muhammad

The point is that Muhammad himself called the People of the Book - Jews and Christians - to put faith in him and in what he brought, just as he called the Arabs and other nations who had no book. It was he who disclosed from Allaah that whoever of the People of the Book and others did not believe in him was an unbeliever who would land in hell and receive an evil fate. It was he who commanded *jihad* against them and he himself and his representatives who summoned them [to Islam].

Unsustainable argument

Therefore their saying in this book, "He did not come to us but to the Arabs of the Jahiliyya" cannot be sustained - whether by that they meant that Allaah sent him to the Arabs and not to them, or whether by it they meant that he claimed that he was sent to the Arabs and not to them. All religious groups have known that Muhammad summoned Jews and Christians to put faith in him, and declared that Allaah sent him to them. He commanded *jihad* against whomever of them did not believe in him. In spite of all this, if it is said, "He was not sent to us but to the Arabs," this is an evident lie no matter whether the person believes or receives him [Muhammad]. The point here is that he himself summoned all the people of the earth to place faith in him, and called the People of the Book, just as he called those without a book.

Those who believed and those who disbelieved

The Jews were his neighbours in Hijaz, in Madina, and its environs, and at Khaybar. The Muhajirun and the Ansar all believed in him without sword or fighting; when he manifested to them proofs of his prophethood and indications of his truthfulness, they believed in him, although insults for the sake of Allaah befell those who believed in him. This is well known from the biography of the Prophet.

Many Jews and Christians - some in Mecca and some in Madina and many from elsewhere than Mecca and Madina - believed in him. When he came to Madina, he made a pact with those Jews who did not believe in him. Then when they broke the pact, and he exiled some of them and killed others for making war upon Allaah and His messenger. He fought against them time after time. When he fought the Banu Nadir, Allaah revealed the Surat al-Hashr about them. He fought the Qurayza the year of the clans and Allaah mentioned them in the Surat al-Ahzab. Before that he fought the Banu Qaynuqa. After this he had the people of the Bay'at al-Ridwan - who pledged allegiance to him under the tree - raid Khaybar. They were 1,400 people. Allaah conquered Khaybar for them, where the Jews had been residing as farmers. Allaah revealed the Surat al-Fath in which he mentioned this incident. When this was situation of the Jews with him, how can it be said that he was sent only to the idolatrous Arabs?

Open call to the contemporary leaders

Muslim has extracted a hadith report from Anas that the Messenger of Allaah wrote to Khusraw, Caesar, Negus and to every important leader, summoning them to Allaah. (This was not the Negus for whom he [Muhammad] mourned to his companions on the day he died. He went

out with them to the prayer room and lined up and did *salah* for him.) Rather, it was another Negus who reigned after him.

Muslim extracted from Abu Haritha a report in which the Messenger of Allaah said:

"I was given preference over the prophets in six things: I was given comprehensiveness in utterance, I was delivered from fear, I was permitted booty, for me the earth was made a pure mosque, I was sent to mankind in its entirety and with me the prophets were concluded [sealed]."

The Prophet said, "The prophet is sent to his people specifically and I was sent to the people in general." Allaah said:

"Say (O Muhammad): 'I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allah to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth.'" (7:158)
And:

"We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind but most of men know not." (34:28)

The Qur'an invites the People of the Book

In the Qur'an, in very many places there is mention of his summoning the People of the Book to faith in him. In it Allaah even states the disbelief (*kufr*) of those of the Jews and Christians who disbelieved, and in it He commanded that they [the Muslims] should fight them (4:171-73: 5:17; 5:72-77; 9:29-32).

These indications and others many times as many are among that which make it clear that he himself reported that he was a Messenger of Allaah to the Christians and other People of the Book. He summoned them [to Islam] and waged *jihad* against them.

The call to the People of the Book not an innovation of later Muslims

This is not an innovation that his community invented after him, as Christians did after Christ. Muslims do not permit a single person after Muhammad to change a thing of his Law - to permit what he forbade, to forbid what he permitted, to necessitate what he eliminated, to eliminate what he necessitated. Rather, what is permissible (*al-halal*) among them is what Allaah and His messenger permitted, and what is forbidden (*al-haram*) is what Allaah and His messenger forbade.

Christian innovations

Religion is what Allaah and His messenger legislated, as opposed to the Christians, who introduced after Christ innovations which were not legislated by Christ nor were mentioned by any passage from the gospels of the earlier books of the prophets. They claim that what their great leaders legislated for them by way of religion was passed on to them by

Christ. This is an area over which the three communities - Muslims, Jews and Christians - have disputed, just as they have disputed about Christ and other things.

Between Divine legislation and Human imposition

Jews do not permit Allaah to abrogate anything of His legislation. Christians permit their leaders to abrogate Allaah's legislation by their opinions. Muslims, however, believe that to Allaah belongs creation and command. There is no legislation but that which Allaah legislated by the tongues of His messengers. To Him [belongs the right] to abrogate whatever He wills, as He abrogated through Christ what He had legislated to the prophets before him. Among the Christians, however, their great men imposed their beliefs and legal prescriptions upon them after [the time of] Christ, as the 380 men who lived in the time of Constantine imposed the creed upon which they had agreed. They cursed the Arians and others who opposed them. In this creed there are matters that Allaah has not revealed in any book; rather it opposes the books which Allaah revealed and it opposes sound reason as well.

Invented laws and rule and additions and alterations

They have prescribed for them laws and rules that were not found in the books of the prophets nor indicated by them. Some of it is found in the books of the prophets, but their religious leaders added things of their own which were not found in the books of the prophets. They changed much of what the prophets had legislated. The laws and regulations of the Christians, which are handed down from the prophets, partly from the apostles, while many come from the innovation of their great men in spite of their opposition to the legislation of the prophets.

Christian parallels with Judaism

Their religion is the same type as that of the Jews. They [the Jews] had clothed what was true with falsehood, and Christ was sent with the [same] religion of Allaah as the prophets before him. It is the service of Allaah alone allowing nothing to participate in that worship; it is prohibition from worship of everything except Him. He [Christ] permitted to them some of what Allaah had forbidden in the Torah, and he abrogated some of the law of the Torah.

Roman and Greek pagans summoned to the religion of Allaah by Christ

The Romans, Greeks and others were pagans who were worshipping celestial temples and terrestrial idols. Christ sent his messengers to summon them to the religion of Allaah. He sent some of them during his lifetime on earth and others after his assumption into heaven. He called them to the religion of Allaah and there were some who entered into Allaah's religion. They held to that [religion] for a while and then Satan tempted some of them to change the religion of Christ. They innovated a religion combining the religion of Allaah and His messengers - i.e., the religion of Christ - and the religion of pagans.

Roman and Greek

The pagans used to worship bodily images that cast shadows, for this

was the religion of the Romans and Greeks. It was the religion of the philosophers among the people of Macedon and Ephesus, such as Aristotle and the peripatetic philosophers like him and others. Aristotle lived 300 years before Christ and was the minister of the Greek Macedonian, Alexander, the son of Phillip, whose exploits were recorded in the Roman history of the Jews and Christians. He was a pagan who with his people worshiped idols.

pagan worship

He was not named Dhu al-Qarnayn, nor was he the Dhu al-Qarnayn mentioned in the Qur'an. This Macedonian did not reach the land of the Turks or the sons of the dam. He only reached the land of the Persians. Whoever supposes that Aristotle was the minister of Dhul al-Qurnayn mentioned in the Qur'an has erred, and his mistake shows that he is not knowledgeable about the religions of these people and their times.

A misconception concerning Dhul-Qarnayn

When the religion of Christ appeared 300 years after Aristotle in the land of the Romans and the Greeks, people followed *tawhid* up to the appearance of innovations among them. Then they fashioned images drawn on the wall and made these images a substitute for those other images. Others used to worship the sun, moon and stars, and so these began to prostrate themselves before them towards the direction of the sunrise from which sun, moon and stars appeared. They made their prostration towards it [the east] a substitute for their prostration before them [the heavenly bodies].

The appearance of Christ

For this reason came the Seal of the Messengers, with whom Allaah concluded messengership. Through him He made manifest the fullness of *tawhid*, which He had not manifested before him. He commanded that each person take care not to do *salah* during the rising of the sun or its setting because pagans prostrate themselves before it at that time. If those professing the Oneness of Allaah pray at that hour, that would be a type of imitation of them and it could be taken as a pretext for making prostration before it [the sun].

The sending of Muhammad

One of the greatest causes of idol worship has been the fashioning of images and the glorification of tombs. In Muslim's collection of sound hadiths and elsewhere he said from Abu al-Hayaj:

Causes of idol-worship and their severe prohibition

"Ali Ibn Abu Talib said to me: 'Didn't I send you with what the Messenger of Allaah sent me?' He commanded me that I omit no honoured tomb but to level it, no statue but to efface it.'"

It is in the Collection that the Messenger said during his fatal sickness:

"May Allaah curse the Jews and Christians who have taken the tombs of the prophets as mosques."

Thus he warned against doing what they did. It is in the Collections that five nights before his death he said:

"Those who were before you used to take tombs as mosques. Do not do that. Do not take tombs as mosques, for I have forbidden you that."

When they mentioned to him the church in the land of Ethiopia and related to him the beautiful things and pictures in it, he said:

"Those people, when some upright man among them dies, they build a mosque on his tomb and they fashion those pictures. Those people are the worst of creation before Allaah on the Resurrection Day."

He forbade a man to face a grave in prayer so that he would not resemble the pagans who prostrated themselves before graves. It is in the Collections that he said, "Do not sit at graves and do not pray towards them."

Hadith reports similar to that could be mentioned in which there is a stripping of *tawhid* to Allaah, the Lord of the Universe. This is what Allaah has revealed in His books; it is with this He has sent His Messengers.

The Prophets never ordered worship of created objects and beings

What relationship is there in this to someone who fashions pictures of created things in churches, who extols them and seeks intercession from him whose picture he has fashioned? Hasn't this been the basis for idol worship among mankind from the time of Noah until now? Prayer towards the sun, moon, and stars and prostration in their direction is a pretext for prostrating before them. Not one of the prophets ever commanded the use of pictures or seeking intercession from their patrons or making prostration towards the sun, moon and stars. Although it was mentioned about one of the prophets that he fashioned an image for the sake of general welfare, this is one of the matters on which the laws may vary; by contrast, prostration before them and seeking intercession from those represented was never legislated by a single prophet. No one of the prophets ever commanded anyone to pray to someone other than Allaah, neither at his grave nor his absence, nor to seek intercession in his absence after his death. By contrast, seeking intercession from the Prophet during his lifetime and on the Resurrection Day, and mediating one's prayers through him and one's faith in him, is something commanded by the prophets, as Allaah has said (10:18; 16:36; 21:25; 39:1-4; 43:45).

The Magian Dualists

Among the pagans of all peoples there has not been anyone who said, "For created things there are two separate creators, mutually resembling each other in attributes." No known group of people has ever held this. Dualists among the Magians and others hold that the universe has

issued forth from two principles - light and darkness. According to them light is the praiseworthy Allaah of goodness and darkness is the accursed Allaah of evil. Some of them hold that darkness is Satan, and this is to make the evil in the world to issue from darkness. Some of them hold that darkness is pre-eternal and everlasting. As well as its being accursed it is not, according to them, similar to light. Some of them hold, rather, that it has come into being in time, that light had a wicked thought and that darkness came into being from that wicked thought.

The people of *tawhid* say to them: "In spite of your claim that you hate to ascribe to the Lord the creation of evil that is in the universe, you have made Him a creator of the principle of evil." These people, despite their affirming two [ultimate principles] and their being called Dualists by people, do not hold that evil is similar to good.

The Materialists and Philosophers

Similarly, the Materialists (*al-Dahriyya*) - the materialist philosophers and others - some of them deny a Maker for the world, like the view manifested by Pharaoh - may Allaah curse him! Others among them, like Aristotle and his followers, hold for a Cause of the movement of the celestial spheres which [movement] is attendant upon it. Still others among them, like Ibn Sina and Al-Suhrawardi - the one killed in Aleppo - and the would be-philosophers of the [three] religions like them, hold for the necessity of the essence prerequisite for the heavenly spheres.

The Pagan Arabs

The pagan Arabs and those similar to them used to confess a Maker who created the heavens and the earth. The belief of the pagan Arabs was better than the belief of these materialist philosophers, since they believed that the heavens were created by Allaah and came into being after they had not been. This is the belief of the masses of the people of the earth among the adherents to the three religions - Muslims, Jews, and Christians - as well as Magians and pagans. But these materialists among the philosophers and others claim that the heavens were pre-eternal, that they had never ceased to be.

Difference between the Pagan Arabs and the Materialist Philosophers

The pagan Arabs used to hold that Allaah was able to act according to His will and to answer the prayer of one who prayed to Him, but according to these materialist philosophers Allaah does not do a thing by His will, nor does He answer the prayer of the one who prays. Rather, He does not know particulars, nor does He distinguish this supplicant from that. He does not know Abraham from Moses from Muhammad from others of His greatest messengers. There are even those among them like Aristotle and his followers who deny His knowledge absolutely, while others like Ibn Sina and those like him state He only knows universals.

Refuting the Philosophers

It is obvious that everything existent in external reality is a specific particular. If, therefore, He does not know anything but universals, He

does not know a thing of specific existent beings - neither celestial spheres, nor sovereigns, nor anything else of existing beings in their real natures. Among them prayer is the manipulation on the part of a powerful Soul upon the matter of the universe, as say ibn Sina and those like him. They claim that the Inscribed Tablet (*al-Lawh al-Mahfuz*) is the celestial Soul, and that all things coming into being in time on earth occur only from the movement of the spheres, as has been elaborated in the refutation of them elsewhere.

The Pagan Arabs affirmed the Lordship of Allaah over creation

The point here is that the pagans do not establish alongside Allaah another Allaah equal to Him in deeds and attributes. They did not even hold that the stars, sun, and moon created the earth, or that idols created a single thing of the earth.

A misconception concerning Abraham

Whoever supposes that the people of Abraham al-Khalil used to believe that the stars or the sun or the moon was the Lord of the universe or that al-Khalil when he said, "This is my Lord," meant by that that the Lord of the Universe is clearly mistaken. The people of Abraham rather, used to admit a Maker, but used to commit *shirk* in worshipping him like other idolaters.

The people of Abraham

Allaah disclosed about Abraham (26: 69-101) that he was an enemy to all that they were worshipping except the Lord of the Universe. He disclosed about them that on the Resurrection Day they will say, "By Allaah, we were truly in manifest error when we made you equal to the Lord of the Universe" (26:79-98). They were not acting worthily towards the Maker, but they strayed from Him and made partners to Him in worship, love and prayer, as Allaah has said elsewhere (43:26-27).

He [Abraham] said, "I have turned my face to Him who created the heavens and the earth as a *hanif* a Muslim, and I am not one of those who commit *shirk*." He did not say, "One of those who raise Allaah to irrelevance (*mu'attilin*)." His people were committing *shirk*, and were not making Allaah distantly transcendent like the accursed Pharaoh.

The people of Noah

However, they were not acting worthily towards the Maker, but they strayed from Him and made partners to Him in worship, love and prayer, as Allaah said (2:165; 6:1; 17:22; 25:68; 26:213). In what He related about the people of Noah, He said:

"And they have said: 'You shall not leave your Allaahs, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwa', nor Yaghuth, nor Ya'uq, nor Nasr (names of the idols); "And indeed they have led many astray. And (O Allah): 'Grant no increase to the Zalimun (polytheists, wrong-doers, and disbelievers, etc.) save error.'" (71:23-24)

The basis of idol-

Ibn 'Abbas and other scholars have said that these ["Allaahs"] were

upright individuals among the people of Noah who when they died, people devoted themselves to their tombs, and then fashioned statues of them and worshipped them. Thus it is among the Christians about Christ in the book, *The Secret of Peter* - who is called Simeon (*Sam'an*), Cephas (*al-Sufa*), and Peter (*Butrus*). The four names represent one person among them. From him there is a book about Christ in which are the secrets of [divine] sciences. According to them all of this comes from Christ. That which Christians do forms the basis for idol worship. Thus said their great scholar who they call "the Golden Mouth" [John Chrysostom] - and he is one of their greatest scholars - when he mentioned the birth of great sins from the small. He said, "In this way idol worship invades upon that which preceded it - when people honour individuals and extol one another, the living and the dead, beyond the level they should." Allaah said:

worship is aggrandisement of pious individuals

"Say (O Muhammad): "Call unto those besides Him whom you pretend [to be Allaahs like angels, Isa (Jesus), 'Uzair (Ezra), etc.]. They have neither the power to remove the adversity from you nor even to shift it from you to another person." Those whom they call upon [like 'Isa (Jesus) - son of Maryam (Mary), 'Uzair (Ezra), angel, etc.] desire (for themselves) means of access to their Lord (Allah), as to which of them should be the nearest and they ['Isa (Jesus), 'Uzair (Ezra), angels, etc.] hope for His Mercy and fear His Torment. Verily, the Torment of your Lord is something to be afraid of!" (17:56-57)

A group of scholars has said that the people were praying to angels and prophets like Elijah, Christ and the others. Allaah has made it clear that these are His servants just as you are His servants, they hope in His mercy just as you hope in His mercy, they fear His punishment just as you fear His punishment, they draw near to Him just as you draw near to Him (3:79-80).

Worship of Prophets and Angels

Allaah has announced that whoever takes the angels and prophets as lords is an unbeliever even though he believes they are created. No one ever held that all the angels and prophets shared with Allaah in the creation of the earth, but Allaah said:

"And most of them believe not in Allaah except that they attribute partners [to Him]." (12:106)

Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid and others have said, "Ask them who created the heavens and the earth and they will say 'Allaah' But they worship other than Him." This is similar to Allaah's statement (31:25). Elsewhere Allaah has disclosed about the idolaters that they hold that the creator of the world is One despite their taking Allaahs beside Him whom they worship and their taking intercessors before Him or their drawing near to Him through them.

Innovated Christian symbols and rituals

In this way their exaltation of the cross, their permitting pork, their honouring monasticism, their abandonment of circumcision, their omission of purification from ritual uncleanness (*al-hadath*) and impurity (*al-khubth*), their not necessitating the complete washing (*al-ghusl*) after sexual intercourse, nor the simple ablution - they do not oblige one to avoid a single ritually contaminating thing in prayer, neither excrement, urination nor any other contaminating thing - all these laws of theirs they have invented and innovated after Christ. Their priest and their people obeyed these [laws] and cursed whoever opposed them so that anyone among them who held firmly to the pure religion of Christ came to be defeated and persecuted before Allaah sent Muhammad. Most of the laws and the religion that they hold are not found to be stipulated by Christ.

The nature of the transmitted Islamic legislation and consensus

Among Muslims, however, everything upon which they have attained evident consensus is known both generally and specifically to have been handed down from their prophet, and it is known that no one after him introduced it either by his own creative application (*ijtihad*) or in any other way. What they declare firmly by consensus of the community of Muhammad is found to be taken from their prophet.

The perfection of religion necessitates seeking of knowledge not change or alteration

That on which their consensus is supposed but is not firmly stated contains some things upon which that supposition may be in error, and there may be dispute among them about it. Furthermore, there may be a text of the Messenger to support this saying and it may be in accordance with this saying. On some things of this kind the supposition of consensus is correct, and it may include something whose proof that it is a true tradition from the prophet is hidden or knowledge of it is [only] among some people. That is because Allaah has perfected religion in Muhammad as the seal of the prophets. He made it manifest and communicated it as the clear pronouncement. His community thus has no need for anyone after him to change a thing of his religion. Only that which he brought is needed for knowledge of his religion. His community does not agree on an error; moreover, there will not cease to be in his community a group grounded on the truth until the Hour arrives.

Guidance and the religion of truth

Allaah sent him with guidance and the religion of truth to make it conquer over all religions. He made it conquer with proof and clear argument, and He has made it conquer by power and spear. Until the arrival of the Hour, there will never cease to be in his community a group manifesting [the truth].

The consensus of the Muslims is not erroneous

The point here is that whatever the community agrees upon in evident consensus it knows in general and in specifics that it is handed down from their prophet. We do not bear witness to infallibility except for the sum of the community. Among the many sects of the community, however, there are innovations opposed to the Messenger, some of

which are of the type of innovation of the Jews and Christians. There is rebelliousness and disobedience in them, but the Messenger of Allaah is innocent of that, as Allaah has said (6:159; 26:216).

Matters known by consensus

The Messenger said, "Whoever prefers something other than my sunna is not of me." This is similar to the consensus [of Muslims] that Muhammad was sent to all people - People of the Book and others. If they have received this from their prophet, and it is something handed down among them by successive transmission, they know it by necessity. It is similar to their consensus on facing the Ka'ba the Sacred House, in their *salah*. This consensus of theirs for [the direction of prayer] is based upon successive transmission from their prophet, and is mentioned in their book. Similarly, the consensus upon the necessity for the five prayers, the fasting during the month of Ramadan, the pilgrimage to the Ancient House [the Ka'ba] which Abraham the Friend of the Compassionate One built and called his people to pilgrimage, the pilgrimage of the prophets and even the pilgrimage of Moses Ibn 'Imran and Yunus Ibn Matta and others, their consensus on the necessity of ablution from ritual impurity and the prohibition of disgusting things, the obligation of purity of prayer - all this is among what they have received from their prophet, and it is handed down from him by successive transmission and is mentioned in the Qur'an.

Christian tenets, symbols and traditions not known by consensus and successive transmission

Among Christians, however, the prayers that they say are not handed down from Christ, nor is the fast that they make handed down from him. Rather, they first made the fast forty days, then they increased it by ten days and moved it to spring, but this has not been handed down among them from Christ. Similarly, nothing in their pilgrimage to his sepulchre and Bethlehem and the church of Saydnaya was handed down from Christ. Similarly, even the generality of their feasts like the feasts of the Qalandas, Christmas, the Epiphany - and it is the most sacred - the feast of Thursday, the Feast of the Cross which they began at time of the appearance of the cross when Helena the Harranian innkeeper, mother of Constantine, made it known two hundred years after Christ, the feast of Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the end of their fast, other feasts which they derive from the affairs of Christ, and their feasts which they have innovated for their great persons - all of these are innovations of theirs which they have invented without the sanction of a revealed book. They have even built churches in the name of someone they extol, as in the Collections from the prophet:

"If some upright man among them dies they build a mosque on his grave on which they draw those pictures. On the Day of Resurrection they will be the worst of mankind before Allaah." As Allaah has said (7:29; 9:18; 24:36; 72:18).